

Deltona dog brings home bacon from Tampa

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For a Pekinese from Deltona, the AKC/Eukanuba National Championship proved to be a doggie-dog world.

But that's no matter. He still came home a winner.

Bradley, whose American Kennel Club registered name is CH. Deja vu Pekehuis Gold Fusion, returned from the international competition in Tampa last weekend, having won the honors of Best in Breed and Best Bred By in the Best of Breed section.

Bradley is owned and bred by Winifred J. Mee and Susan Shephard of Deltona.

Costello, an Alaskan Malamute, was named Best in Show, Best Bred-By Exhibitor in Show and Viewer Choice Winner. Costello, from Lockport, N.Y., earned more than \$80,000 and the title of the nation's top dog.

"For the first time in the history of our show, the same dog took home all the top prizes," Ron Menaker, AKC chairman said. "Millions of dog lovers watched him as he moved gracefully and proudly around the ring."

"But Costello is not the only winner here. We congratulate the more than 2,600 competitors from 20 countries for their achievement."

The other Volusia County competing canines, Jack, Callie, Spanky, Dixie and Bryson, may not have been the big victors, but they still had a doggone good time.

The pooches contested in what event promoters called the Canine Olympics, a challenge divided by three competitions: the AKC National Obedience Invitational, the AKC National Agility Championship and the AKC/Eukanuba National Championship.

Jack, an Australian Shepherd, and Callie, an English Springer Spaniel, were competitors in the AKC National Agil-

ity Championship.

Spanky, a cocker spaniel, and Dixie and Bryson, both Irish Terriers, represented their breeds in the AKC Eukanuba National Championship.

Many individuals were glued to the tube this past weekend as the Group and Best in Show competitions were simulcast live on the Animal Planet and the Discovery Channel. More than 156,000 dog lovers watching the show voted online for their favorite fur ball for each group at www.animalplanet.com.

While the telecast featured ideal examples of many breeds, the other contests gave top honors for the nation's most obedient and most athletic, demonstrating the highest level of training and teamwork between dog and handlers. Canines had to qualify at the highest levels in order to compete.

Obedience trials test a dog's ability to perform a prescribed set of exercises on which the pooch is scored. Nearly 150 of the nation's top Obedience Trial Champion pointed dogs competed for the coveted title of AKC National Obedience Invitational Champion. The 2006 winner is a Labrador retriever from Littleton, Colo.

One of the winners in the agility competition was a Papillon from Florida.

Agility events allow dogs to demonstrate their athleticism and versatility by racing against the clock and overcoming a challenging obstacle course. Success requires proper training, as it is a sport of physical skill, control, patience and – most importantly – teamwork between handler and dog.

Five agility dogs and their owners – one dog/handler team in each of the five height categories – were crowned champions at the event, which brought together nearly 700 dogs from across the country.



Photo courtesy of American Kennel Club

What's Next

AKC Agility Event No. 2006292402.

When: Jan. 28 and 29, all day beginning at 8 a.m.

Where: Municipal Stadium, 3777 LPGA Blvd., Daytona Beach

Who: Most experienced dogs run first, then intermediate and novices last.

Miscellaneous: The public is invited to attend at no cost but take a lawn chair to sit on.

You may take your own dog, but it needs to be well-behaved and on a leash. The dogs at the trials are nearly 100 percent friendly and do well with children, but ask before petting.

Bradley, owned by Winifred J. Mee and Susan Shephard of Deltona, won the honors of Best in Breed and Best Bred By in the Best of Breed section in Tampa on Sunday.

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